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"I CANNOT TELL: GOD KNOWETH."

2 Cor. xii. 2.

[The following original article from the pen of our brother Stock appeared in the *New York Chronicle* and *Philadelphia Christian Chronicle* of January 12th, 1865. We have great pleasure in laying it before our readers.]

These words are often used lightly; but by Paul they were employed reverently and devoutly to express his inability to explain the phenomena of his rapture to heaven. He confessed his own ignorance, but comforted himself in the thought of God's knowledge. The words are eminently suggestive of profitable reflection.

I. They remind us of the numerous cases in which we have to say, "I Cannot Tell."—Here was an instance in which a man underwent a wonderful temporary change, of the reality of which he could have no doubt, but the mode of which was to him an insolvable mystery. He knew that he had been caught up into paradise, and had heard unspeakable words; but how all this had been, he could not tell. The fact was to him matter of personal consciousness: the explanation of the fact was beyond his reach.

And is it not so with regard to the whole of our being? Life itself is an awful mystery. The soul resides in the body, and communicates its impulses through the nervous system to every member; but how the soul moves the nervous system which moves the body, we cannot tell. How the soul can be diffused through the body, without being a part of it, how the soul will exist in a separate state, how body and soul will be reünited at the resurrection, how the identity of the body will be preserved amid the immense changes to which it will be subjected, when raised again—are all matters concerning which we must confess our utter ignorance. We know that we live, that we have souls, that these souls think, reason, and exercise volition, and that the body is merely a soul-moved machine; but if asked *how* all this is, we are compelled to say, "We cannot tell!"

Still greater mysteries are there in the higher life, the life in Christ. How the Spirit operates in regeneration, opening the heart to receive the truth, of which we are said to be born again: and how the Divine seed dwells in the saints, so that they cannot sin, because they are born of God—are even more inscrutable than the natural life. And then, if we ascend to the highest form

of life, the life of the Eternal God, we are crushed down to the earth by the greatness of its mystery. How God exists by a necessity of nature; how he fills the regions of immensity with his presence, and is in all his works without being confounded with them; how he combines in his one Divine essence a trinity of persons; how the two natures are for ever united in the person of the Christ, the Divine not having become human, nor the human Divine, and yet both constituting but one adorable Mediator,—these are matters about which we know absolutely nothing. The facts we accept with reverential faith, upon Divine testimony; but their modes are to us darkness itself. Here emphatically we cannot tell.

The extent of the universe is for us another mystery. Space must be infinite; for God fills it. The light in which Jehovah dwells must be as limitless as his own essence; and yet the creation is not infinite, for there is but one Infinite, and that is the Lord our God. But if the creation is finite, if it has limits, what is there beyond? We stand, in thought, upon the verge of the universe of worlds, peering into the darkness and void which lie beyond, and asking, "What are they?" but we return baffled and confounded, with the cry, "We cannot tell!"

Turning from this region of thought, we come to another equally prolific of insolvable problems, viz.—the relation which Jehovah sustains to his works and creatures. If we ask how the Most High operates through second causes, and how absolute Divine predestination is to be harmonised with human free agency and responsibility, we are compelled to the confession, "We cannot tell." All our efforts to solve these great moral enigmas must end in disappointment. We may mitigate the pressure of such difficulties; but substantially the difficulties remain, after our most earnest and laborious endeavours to remove them.

Who has not trembled beneath the shadow of that mighty mystery, the permission of moral and physical evil? This is the great difficulty in Divine Providence. We know what has been so often and so eloquently written on the good which the Great Eternal will bring out of the permitted entrance of sin; and we believe it all most devoutly. But then the question arises, As with God nothing is impossible, why could not all the good results which the existence of iniquity is made to bring forth, have been secured in some other way, that would not have inflicted such suffering on the creation? Might not all the good have been secured without the evil? Why such a process to reach such a result? There can be but one answer to such inquiries, We cannot tell! Without doubt the arrangement that exists must be, all things considered, the best that could have been devised. The fact, that God has so willed, is sufficient proof of this. But the *how* of this sublime truth is to be perfectly mastered by only one intellect, the mind of Jehovah himself.

God's dealings with individual Christians, and with churches and nations collectively, present us with many mysteries. Who can tell why some of the most eminent saints on earth are permitted to be so heavily, so continuously, and, as to this world, so hopelessly afflicted? It was in a visit to a tried believer that the writer was led into the train of thought which he is committing to this paper. Imagine a lovely and devoted saint, only yet of middle age, the mother of a numerous family, a zealous worker in the church, consigned to a bed of agony, unspeakable and without intermission, which has already lasted three dreary years and may last many years longer, without the least prospect of abatement while life lasts! We doubt not that in every such case the discipline will be sanctified and overruled for immense good: but then the query is suggested, Why subject a beloved child to such fearful anguish in order to attain results which our Heavenly Father could easily produce in some other and less terrible way? We veil our faces and reverently answer, We cannot tell. We have to satisfy ourselves with the assurance that, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose."

II. These words assure us of the infinite knowledge which God has even of the deepest mysteries. "God knoweth!"—Sublime words! and words which we may in every case append to our confession of personal ignorance.

God knoweth all things, with their various relationships, and their ultimate reasons. The *how* of every mysterious fact, and the *why* of every providential riddle, are all patent to His infinite intellect. Nothing is so minute, as to escape His notice, and nothing is so vast as to overwhelm and master his comprehension. Atoms of matter, drops of water, single sunbeams, are each as perfectly known by Him as if they were the only things in existence; while worlds, and systems of worlds, and, in short, an entire universe, are as easily and perfectly known by him as the sparrow or the worm. He knows everything about all things. He surveys every object, and creature, and event all round, beholding at a glance, all its relations to all other things; and all its issues in the whole of Eternity. He knows why every thing is as it is, and not otherwise.

God knoweth by a necessity of nature. His stores of informatian are not acquired, but are inherent. With us knowledge is obtained step by step with wearisome labour: not so the knowledge of the Most High. To know is with Jehovah as natural as to be. He knows without effort. If he did not know all things, he would not be God: but because he is God, therefore, he knows all things.

God knoweth infallibly. His acquaintance with truth is unmixed with error. He can never be mistaken; but invariably sees things as they are. One inaccuracy in Jehovah's knowledge would dislocate the whole scheme of things, just as an error in the beginning of an arithmetical sum would derange all the following figures. But with God to make a mistake or to believe an error is a natural and essential impossibility.

God knoweth always. His knowledge is one vast whole. He will not know more, millions of ages hence, than he knows now. He did not know less when the morning star first glimmered in the firmament than he will know at the last day. He knoweth the end from the beginning. Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world. It has been true in an eternity past, and will be true in an eternity to come, that GOD KNOWETH. But this very knowledge is a mystery to our ignorance. It is too high for us: we cannot attain unto it. Before this majestic attribute of the Ever Living One we fall prostrate and adore!

III.—These words suggest that the fact of God's all comprehending knowledge should comfort us under our ignorance. When Paul was baffled by the mysteries of his rapture to paradise, he comforted himself with the thought that God knew all about that wonderful incident. Thus may every devout mind solace itself under the pressure of its difficulties. To the holy soul conscious of its own ignorance there is sweet refreshment in the thought that "God knoweth." Let us look at the consolation which the Divine knowledge should furnish to our ignorance.

1. Does God know? Then every mystery has its own solution. How often does the earnest, thoughtful student sigh out in the bitterness of his disappointment at the failure of all his efforts to solve some mighty moral problem, "Oh! that this were knowable! Would that this difficulty were removable! Would that this thick darkness were capable of dispersion!" But there stands the mystery across the path of his progress still. The clouds will not lift. He is brought to a dead halt. Further advance in that direction is impossible!

But let such a one comfort himself amid the agony of his disappointment with the thought that the difficulty which overwhelms him is not only solvable but solved. There is one Intellect at least which has mastered the problem. To all events there is a solution. Things are only mysterious or difficult relatively. What is dark to us is clear to God. The universe is transparent enough, but we cannot see its full glory, nor master the depths of wisdom which are laid

bare in its wonders. It is surely a refreshing thought, that such a thing as an insolvable mystery does not exist. We may not know the solution, but God does. *It exists* beyond all question, though hidden from our eyes. We cannot tell, but God knoweth. "All things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with which we have to do." There is a key to the unlocking of every ward in the Divine scheme of things.

2. It is not necessary that we should know what God has purposely concealed. "Secret things belong unto the Lord: the things which are revealed belong unto us and unto our children."

All is made known that we require to know for our faith, consolation, and sanctification. What is concealed it is not necessary that we should know. Life is none the less pleasant that we are unable to unravel many of its phenomena. The universe is still glorious, though darkened in some of its provinces by the shadow of evil. Redemption is the masterpiece of Divine wisdom and love, though the entrance of sin be a mystery. Jehovah is the supreme excellence, though he dwells in light which no man can approach unto A free and unmerited predestination to eternal life is a precious and soul-comforting doctrine spite of all the controversies of divines about free-will. The heaviest afflictions are light when compared with the glory for which they are training God's elect. The Divine life in the soul is a blessed reality, though the influence producing it is like the wind which bloweth where it listeth, and concerning which it is said, we cannot tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth. The path of true faith is ever clear. All that is vital is so plain that he may run that readeth. What we need for our comfort in affliction is set forth in beautiful simplicity. All that is required for our sanctification, for our guidance in the paths of rectitude, is placed before us in a way that leaves no excuse for mistake. By a careful study of God's Word we may always tell how to live and act. No man would be a better man morally by being able to explain the mysteries which are hidden from all. Would a perfect theory of abstract truth, a theory that should leave no difficulties unsolved, were such a theory possible to the human intellect, make us stronger to resist temptation, and to do God's will? Would the ability to unriddle all the recondite phenomena of human life, of regeneration, of the mode of the Divine existence, of the constitution of the person of Christ, of space, of the universe, of predestination, of free-will, of a Divine cause in second causes, of the permission of evil, of the afflictions of eminent saints, add to our efficiency as the fellow-workmen of God? We think not. Our Divine Father has veiled no truth which our necessities required to be unveiled. The confession, *I cannot tell*, has never to be uttered where our best interests demand that we should be able to tell.

3. As God knows, all must be well ordered. While there are many things which it is not necessary that *we* should know, it is necessary that nothing should be concealed from Jehovah. The interests of the universe demand that, from the mind of the Ruler of all, no truth, or fact, or thing should be hidden. The how and the why of everything, with all their relations and consequences, Jehovah ought to know. All modes require to be patent to his view. For He has the government of the universe upon his shoulders, and ignorance upon even the most recondite truths, would incapacitate him for that exalted and tremendously momentous position. The mind recoils in utter terror from the thought of God's ignorance upon any point!

But GOD KNOWETH; this is a universal proposition; it is an affirmation which has no limits. Then He knoweth who ought to know; and if he knows, *all will be well*. For while the lot is cast into the lap, the whole disposal thereof is of the Lord. Then the destiny of the universe is in safe keeping; then the history of "The Holy Catholic Church," is the best history that could have been written, and the heaviest afflictions of true believers are the wisest and most gracious discipline to which they could have been subjected. All must be well, and all will end well, if God knoweth. On this rock the believer might

stand if the world were in flames, and the heavens were passing away with great noise. Amid the uproar of dissolving nature the saints will rejoice in the thought that God knoweth. His knowledge is our security, for "our times are in his hands." Let self-will, rebellion, impatience, and unbelief, be all quelled in the majestic presence of Jehovah's infinite knowledge. Thy interests, believer, are in competent hands.

4. As God knoweth he will eventually let his children know all that it will be possible and beneficial for them to know. Child of God, it is thy FATHER who knoweth, and who is thy Teacher. Then be sure He will not keep thee in unnecessary ignorance, but will let thee know all that thine intellect is capable of grasping, and all that thy future portion will require!

We are here only in the vestibule of our being; we are just crossing the threshold of knowledge. What our future state may be we know not, so far as details are concerned. All we are told is, that it will be a state of inconceivable glory, of perfect holiness, of unalloyed happiness, of uninterrupted fellowship with God, and of completed conformity to Christ Jesus. There, too, our knowledge will be vastly increased. We shall know even also as we are known, that is, our knowledge will be free from every taint of error, and all our advances will be in the direction of pure, unmixed truth. Our mode of acquiring information will be vastly more facile and pleasant than it is now. No more study with weariness of the flesh; no aching brains and feverish pulse to warn us to rest from our investigations! The path of knowledge will be one of pleasure unmixed.

Still it is a self-evident truth that no creature can ever become infinite in knowledge or in any other attribute. Our acquaintance with truth will never equal that of God. Our information will be acquired; it will be a *progress* step by step; a blessed triumphal march onward and yet onward for ever and ever, and yet never attaining to infinity. As to his *knowledge*, Jehovah dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto. Omniscience can no more be imparted to a creature than can omnipotence or omnipresence. It is probable, too, that there are some truths which are in their nature incapable of being comprehended by a dependent being; among these may be the mode of God's existence, the doctrine of the Trinity, the union of the two natures in the person of the Christ, and the perfect reconciliation of Divine predestination and the free will of the creature. The mode of many things may remain to us everlasting mysteries, calling through the whole of our history for the exercise of pure, simple credence, apart from any ability to explain their *how* or their *why*.

But God knoweth, and he will let us know all that it will be possible for our faculties to grasp, and all that it will be for our good to understand. The Eternal Father will not keep his children in ignorance for ever. The veil shall be lifted where it may be raised consistently with the nature of creatures, the well-being of the redeemed, and the glory of Jehovah. "What we know not now, we shall know hereafter."

Devonport. JOHN STOCK.

SACRIFICE—THE GREAT ATONEMENT.

HAVING considered the design of sin-offering in general, and the bearing of all other expiations upon the Great Atonement, it may be well to conclude our remarks on this subject by a more direct reference to the sacrifice of the Saviour in particular.

We have already seen that the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all was the object to which all other sin-offerings referred, and for which they were appointed—that all the legal atonements were but shadowy and prophetic, and that this is the only real atonement through which man's spirit can have fellowship with God.

But what, it will be asked, is an atonement? If a thoroughly philosophical account of it be demanded, we reply that we have none such to give. To a

great extent, the philosophy of it is yet hidden in the unfathomable depths of the Divine Nature. It is still a mystery. Nor is it wonderful that it should be so. That which bridges over the gulf that sin had opened between man and his Maker, may well span an abyss which no human line can fathom, and open up vistas stretching far beyond the ken of mortal eye. It does indeed confound our wisdom, and baffle our powers of rationalising. But it would be incredible if it did not. The brightness of the Father's glory must overpower our feeble vision, the riches of the Divine wisdom must needs disclose the poverty of all human resources.

Yet the mystery is after all partially revealed. There are certain fitnesses in things of which we may obtain a glimpse, enough to convince us that our view is on the whole correct so far as it goes, though not enough to satisfy a mind thirsting after a deeper acquaintance with Divine truth. Let us see, then, whether we cannot obtain a glimpse of the manner in which this great mystery, so far as it is revealed, harmonises with the whole scheme of Providence so far as we know it.

If, as we have seen, God appointed sacrifice to run coeval with the *history of redemption*, and "smelt a savour of satisfaction" when it was rightly offered and in the right spirit, it must be intimately connected with his moral government as exercised over *fallen creatures*. Now, to what part of His moral government can it have especial regard, if not to that which is administered by penalties?

The moral government of God is conducted on fixed principles—administered through the operation of invariable laws. The breach of these laws involves penalties. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "The wages of sin is death." If it were otherwise, God's moral government would be contrary to the analogy of his natural government. Here, too, there are penalties—penalties which are invariably inflicted. If a man thrusts his hand into a furnace, nothing he can do can save him from the penalty. He may be sorry, but sorrow does not relieve his pain. It is true that a miracle has sometimes been wrought to turn aside the effect of a natural cause, but then it *was* a miracle. Thus in the instance of the three Hebrew youths in the fiery furnace, the fire burnt up the executioners and the cords by which Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were bound, and would have burnt up them too, all in obedience to a natural law, but, in their case, the effect of the law was turned aside. Why? Because subordination to a higher than a natural law required that it should. The operation of natural laws is invariable within a certain sphere, but there is a higher sphere than that which we call natural, which includes the natural, and holds it in subordination. And this, instead of being a contradiction between the systems of God's natural and moral government, is rather the connecting link between them. But, now, since it is only in virtue of a higher constitution of things that the effect of the breach of a law of nature can be turned aside; so if any breach of moral law does not meet with its annexed penalty in the person of the offender, is it not reasonable, and in perfect accordance with the analogies of nature to conclude, that it must be in virtue of a higher constitution of things than that previously revealed? Analogy furnishes a presumption in favour of such a higher constitution of things, and Scripture reveals it as that which "the angels desire to look into." The mercy-seat is that which attracts the wonder and applause of the cherubim on high.

It is this higher constitution of things which the Atonement partially reveals. But in reasoning about it, we must remember that we are placed under a double restriction. Our faculties are limited on the one hand, and the revelation made to us is limited on the other. We see as yet only some bright spots on the invisible outline of the Divine plan, of which the person and work of Christ form the foundation. It becomes us then not to be too specific in our definition of an atonement, and rather to keep within the bounds of truth than to exceed them. Yet we think it will be quite safe to describe the Atonement, as that *through means* of which, and on *condition* of which, God reveals his graciousness

in forgiving sin. This seems to be the meaning attached by Moses to the word when the children of Israel had committed a great sin, and he said to them, "Now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make atonement for your sin." (Exod. xxxii. 30.) And by David when the Israelites were punished with a three years' famine on account of Saul's treatment of the Gibeonites—"And David said to the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement for you, that ye may bless the inheritance of the Lord?"—the atonement required being the execution of seven of the sons of Saul. (2 Sam. xxi. 1—6.) But as God may or may not forgive sin as he pleases, it must be evident that it belongs to him alone to prescribe what atonement (if any) shall be accepted. It is not for us to say beforehand what *we*, from our knowledge of the Divine attributes should judge necessary, but to learn from the Divine word the nature and extent of that Atonement which *He* has provided and accepted.

We need not go over the record of Christ's life and death; the details of his agony are familiar to all our readers. The question we have now before us is, were these sufferings in any respect *penal*, or were they only *symbolical of the penal consequences of sin?* Were they endured in virtue of the claims of a broken law, or simply as a means of moving the hearts of men, and bringing them back to God?

Against the notion that they were "symbolical of the punishment of sin," this much seems conclusive, that in that case the legal sacrifices were symbols of what was itself symbolical, and so were no further shadows, than as being the shadows of a shade.

And if the death of Christ were necessary for no other purpose than that of moving men's hearts Godwards, and leading them to forsake sin, it would seem as if the Atonement had no foundation in the Divine nature or in the fitnesses of things, and as if creatures made in "the image of God" were governed by mere make-believe.

It seems to us, that the Scriptures are so full and precise on this point, as to put it beyond all reasonable doubt that the sufferings of Christ were, in the proper sense of the term, penal.

At present we can only glance at some of the evidence that may be adduced in proof of this from the Law, the Prophets, and the New Testament.

I. From the book of the Law. The Jews lived under a Theocracy. God was their King. When they asked *another* king, He chose one for them, but directed himself the details of government. He was their only political chief. His orders were alike binding on king and subjects. It was one of His express orders that "no satisfaction" should be taken "for the life of a murderer." (Num. xxxv. 31.) But for the political aspect of certain other offences, atonement might be made. In the case of social wrong, the wrong-doer was to make such satisfaction to the person wronged as the law required, and then bring an offering to the Lord as the National Ruler. (Lev. vi. 1—7 and xix. 20—22.) These atonements, no doubt, were instituted in order to have a moral effect in restraining the passions and checking wrong-doing, but they could have this effect only by answering their more immediate object, which evidently was to satisfy the requirements of the law. Their proximate object was *legal*. They were in the strictest sense *penalties*. Now, the satisfaction of law is the primary object of all penalty; and if this were otherwise doubtful, the case of the murderer, without whose death the law could not be satisfied, would dispose of all such doubt. But, if the sin-offerings under the law were penal, and if they were types of a greater and more perfect atonement, the conclusion seems inevitable that that atonement was also penal in its character.

II. This view is corroborated by prophecy. Many passages might be quoted by way of proof. Our space will allow us to refer only to one or two expressions in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. In the 5th verse the prophet says, "The chastisement of our pacification was upon him." Let those who deny that Jesus suffered the penalty of sin, explain the difference between his being *punished*

for the sins of his people, and being chastised in order to their pacification. Again, in the 11th verse, it is said, "He shall bear their iniquities." The expression "to bear sin" generally, if not invariably, in Scripture, means to bear the penalty of sin. Thus (Lam. v. 7), "Our fathers have sinned, and are not; and we have borne their iniquity." In what sense the Jews could suppose they were bearing the sins of their deceased ancestors, except by bearing the penalty of them, it would be difficult to conceive. And so throughout the Levitical law. For instance (Num. xviii. 22), "Neither must the children of Israel henceforth come nigh the tabernacle of the congregation, lest they *bear sin, and die;*" and (Lev. xxii. 9), "Lest they bear their sin, and die therefore;" and other places. Nor are we acquainted with any passage of Scripture in which *bearing sin* does not include bearing, in part at least, its punishment. Besides, what is there about sin which an innocent being can be supposed to bear, if not its imputation or its penalty? And if we examine this matter thoroughly, we can hardly fail to perceive that either of these involves to some extent the other.

Of course, we do not affirm that Jesus suffered precisely in the same way, or to the same extent, as his people would have had to suffer, had they perished; because, first, his people are saved from an eternity of unpardonable sinfulness, which we now know can never exist, and which therefore needed no atonement; and, because, secondly, we are not bound to think that the same flames must necessarily produce the same effect on a green tree as on a dry. But if Jesus did not suffer what was in God's sight equivalent, or what he chose to accept from so holy a Being as an equivalent, for the punishment of his people's sin, it can hardly with truth be said, that "he bore the iniquity of us all" in the sense of bearing its penalty; and, if he did not bear it in its penalty, in what sense can it be said that he bore it at all?

Let us now, III., glance at the teachings of the New Testament on this subject. At the death of Christ, "the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." This vail separated the holy place from the most holy. The entrance into the holiest was barred even to those of the people who were most penitent. The penitence of all the saints of the old dispensation did nothing towards the opening up of the most holy place. Before the throne, and covering the mercy-seat, the vail still remained, till the Saviour, having finished his great work of atonement, "bowed his head and gave up the ghost."

The atonement indeed did not create the mercy-seat, but it opened up the way to it. As the rending of the vail disclosed the ark of the covenant, so the death of Christ removed every obstacle to the full revelation of God's glory. It is in consideration of Jesus' shed blood that God reveals himself as the "Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious."

Sometimes the bearings of Christ's death are confounded with those of his resurrection. Thus *Maurice*, writing on Rom. iii. 20—27, says, "Paul (in this passage) affirms, that the barrier between God and his creatures is removed by himself, is removed freely, without money and without price, and that the act of his Son in shedding his blood is the authentic declaration of that removal." We should rather say, the act of His Son in shedding his blood *is the removal* of the barrier, and his resurrection from the dead by the power of the Father is the *authentic declaration* of that removal. This seems to be the substance of what is taught us in Rom. iv. 25.

As we have incidentally quoted this passage, we may take the opportunity of making another remark upon it, quite within the scope of our object. In it Paul says, "He (Christ) was delivered on account of our offences." But if the only object of His death had been to form in us holy dispositions, the text requires amendment. In that case, he was not delivered on account of our offences, but our offences were first disposed of—done away—and, *then*, Christ was delivered on account of the godly dispositions to be wrought in our minds.

But more remains to be said. He was not only delivered on account of our offences, but raised again on account of (διὰ) our justification. We know not what other meaning can be put upon these words than this, that the penalty He underwent was in the sight of God amply sufficient; that now our sins being atoned, God would in the most signal manner manifest his perfect satisfaction in that atonement, raise his Son from the dead, and give him glory, to show to the whole intelligent universe his hearty approval of Christ's person and work, and how much his soul delights in the redemption of sinners by his blood.

In Gal. iii. 13, Paul says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." If He was made a *curse* for us, he must have borne a *penalty* for us, for whatever we may say about *suffering* in certain cases not being penal, it is impossible to believe that there can be any *curse* in the universe of our God that is not penal. We might close our case here, for in that one word "curse," there is enough to prove all that we contend for.

But this is not all. Christ in the New Testament is called a *Propitiation*, a *Ransom*, a *Mediator*, a *High Priest*, an *Advocate*. Efforts have been made to explain away the proper meaning of some of these names. For instance, in regard to the first of them, it has been said that, in employing the word in Rom. iii. 20—27, "the apostle vindicates the word to a Christian use, showing that for that use, its heathen signification must be—not modified—but inverted." We quote the passage referred to, that the reader may judge for himself whether the apostle *does* show that the meaning of the term is to be inverted:—"Whom God hath set forth a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

In reference to the last of these names—an *Advocate*—it has been said, "The Paraclete is the advocate only so far as he is the person who may be always called in as a friend, adviser, helper, counseller. In this sense, if we follow the analogy of Scripture, Christ the righteous is said to be the Paraclete with the Father." Substitute, then, the explanatory terms *friend*, *adviser*, *helper*, *counsellor*, for Paraclete or Advocate, and see how the passage reads—We have a friend, adviser, helper, or counsellor, with the Father. But why *with the Father?* Why not with *ourselves*, if we need advice or counsel? The phrase "*with the Father*" is altogether inappropriate coupled with advise or counsel. But couple it with *advocacy*, and it becomes beautifully appropriate. And the appropriateness becomes more apparent when we read the passage in its connection. "We have an *Advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the *Propitiation* for our sins." Christ, as a *counsellor*, is *with us* (by his Spirit), but, as an *advocate*, he is with the *Father*, where, in his glorified body, "he ever liveth to make intercession," appearing "in the presence of God for us."

Further, Jesus is called a High Priest. "He is a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." The high priest under the law made reconciliation for Israel, by presenting the blood of the slain victims before the mercy-seat, and the apostle shows that in like manner Jesus, "not by the blood of bulls and goats, but by his own blood, entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

Again, he is called a "Mediator." "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all." (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.) Jesus, as God's *unspeakable gift*, is given *to* us, but, as a *Ransom*, he is given *for* us. And he is a *Mediator* who gave himself a Ransom. The Ransom had to be given, given for us, that the mediation might be effectual.

Suppose, now, that we could, by great mental effort, explain away the proper meaning of each of these designations in detail, and with great appearance

of plausibility in each several case, modifying one expression and inverting another, would the result be highly satisfactory? Would it not occur to us to ask, what need for all this effort? And if all this effort is necessary before we can arrive at the meaning of words, how would a man fare in coming to the Scriptures with nothing but a teachable disposition and plain common sense?

There is yet one other passage of Scripture we must allude to ere we close. It is Eph. v. 2—"Christ hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." In advocacy of the views against which we are contending, it has been said that, "As the sin-offering, Jesus is offered by, and not to, God." But Paul here says, that "Christ hath given himself an offering and a sacrifice *to* God." In what part of Scripture is it written that as a sin-offering He was offered by God? Or, is God ever represented in the Bible as offering any sin-offering whatever? To whom should He offer it? and for what purpose? Uniformly in Scripture is Jesus, as a sin-offering, represented as offered *to* God. "He offered himself without spot to God." (Heb. ix. 14.) "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself." (Heb. vii. 27.)

The effort to reconcile the doctrine of the sin-offering being offered *by* God, with the doctrine of the apostles, only makes its divergence from apostolic teaching more glaring. "He gave himself to God at the world's altar, that God might then make him the world's sacrifice"! Was it then the *world* that smelt a sweet savour? Was it not for a sweet smelling savour to *God* that He gave himself an offering and a sacrifice?

Whatever of old was burnt on God's altar, was said to be burnt "for a sweet savour." Here, then, Christ is compared to the burnt-offering under the law, in which God smelt a sweet savour, or a savour of satisfaction. Christ made himself a whole burnt-offering to God for our sins, and in this sacrifice God smelt a savour of satisfaction. At the same time, this ought not to be separated from the spirit in which all was endured—the spirit of perfect submission to God, and boundless benevolence to man, which never ceased to animate Him throughout his sharpest sufferings, and which could not fail to be "a sweet smelling savour unto God," as it was firmly and unflinchingly adhered to when he was pressed by the accumulation of every possible temptation in its most aggravated form. For there was no circumstance omitted which could give aggravation to His sufferings. It was not only the scourging, laceration, and tearing of His flesh, but the deep anguish he endured when his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, and when, under a sense of desertion, he exclaimed, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!"

It may seem strange to us that a God of infinite compassion, whose heart yearned over his fallen creatures, should clothe himself with such stern and awful majesty as to require such a sacrifice for their sins, but we cannot see to the depth of this awful subject, and must consent to receive the teachings of his word with childlike simplicity and confidence.

And yet we believe we use no extravagant language when we affirm that this Great Sacrifice was designed as the channel for a grander manifestation of God's glorious attributes than any that has yet been revealed in the history of his moral government. It is here, for instance, that we perceive the most glorious manifestation of His *power*. His "*finger*" wrought desolation in Egypt. His "*hands*" formed the dry land. But here, in the sacrifice of Jesus, we see the *arm* of the Lord revealed. The restoration to perfect holiness of innumerable immortal minds, lost to all goodness—what a glorious manifestation of moral power! Here also we see the highest manifestation of His wisdom. "To the principalities and powers in the heavenly places is made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." And what is said of these attributes may be said of all the rest. Each attribute shines more gloriously in the work of redemption than in the work of creation, and all are seen to harmonise in the lovely description given by the beloved disciple, "God is love."

We conclude by endeavouring to obviate what appears to us to be the most serious objection urged against the view we have taken of the design of the Great Sacrifice. It has been said that the view we have adopted necessitates a transfer of sin and righteousness from one person to another, and that sin and righteousness are personal things, incapable of being transferred from person to person.

But what says the Levitical law? In Lev. xvi. 21, we read, "And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, *putting them upon the head of the goat*." To this it may be replied, that the transfer was not an actual one, but figurative only, and that we should not press a figure too far, but view it in the light of other revelations. Be it so. Let us admit, then, that in the Christian system there is no actual transference considered *abstractedly* from person to person. Let us grant that guilt cannot leave one person and attach itself to another as one man may turn over his property to another. We can well afford to grant all this. We would even earnestly warn those who expect Christ to take the legacy of their sins, *and nothing more*, that they will find themselves deceived. The idea that supposes a *transference of our sins* to Christ abstractedly from our *persons*, is one that we do not find in the New Testament. When Christ takes our *sins*, he takes our *persons* too, so that the real transference is of person to person, to make them one—a marriage union—for we are "members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." We become one with Him, leaving our Adamic head, for he that "is joined to the Lord is one spirit." The Father and Christ are one, and the believer and Christ are one. "God was in Christ reconciling"—we *in Christ* are reconciled. "Oh! the depth of the riches, and wisdom, and knowledge of God." Let it not be said that this is a "legal *fiction*." It is legal indeed in the sense of being in agreement with the highest law, but it is no fiction. It is a sweet, but sober reality. It is the essence of eternal life. It sweetens every bitter cup of life, and makes us long to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better. It enables us always to triumph in Him and say, "Who shall separate me from the love of Christ?" Let those who boldly declare the union a *fiction*, tell us when it was, and how, that they discovered the extent of human possibilities, and fathomed the depths of the Divine nature.

Not only is this union insisted on in Scripture, and illustrated by a variety of beautiful imagery, but almost wherever we turn our eyes in nature we behold analagous affinities; we see an illustration of it not only in the conjugal union, but in some measure throughout the whole constitution of things in this lower world. How often do we see the consequences of vicious habits in parents alight on successive generations in diseased bodies and shattered frames—the blunders of generals causing the destruction of a whole army—the negligence of mechanics resulting in disastrous shipwrecks, explosions, and collisions!

Do we complain of this constitution of things? Let us remember that its advantages are incomparably greater than its disadvantages. It admits the possibility of our redemption consistently with a fuller and more glorious development of all the attributes of the infinitely glorious One. It links the destinies of the saved with those of Him who has all power in heaven and in earth, who is "King of kings and Lord of lords," and makes them joint heirs of God with him. Hence the glory that shall be revealed in them—an eternal *weight of glory*—the sublimity and grandeur of which no heart can conceive, no tongue can tell.

Thus the Christian sacrifice, in subordination to which, and in illustration of which all others were appointed, is "a savour of satisfaction" to the Father, reconciles and unites God and man, securing man's highest happiness in connection with the manifestation of God's highest glory.

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THE THOUGHTS OF GOD.

BY W. JENKINS, TREHERBERT, GLAMORGANSHIRE.

HAVING glanced briefly at the thoughts of men in relation to some of their objects, we come now to meditate upon the thoughts of God. We are permitted to look and meditate upon God's thoughts, although we cannot comprehend them. We shall start with the remark—*that God has his thoughts.* There are many thoughts in the heart of man, as we have seen and felt, but we are approaching now to another class of thoughts, quite different in their nature—*the thoughts of the Almighty.* We read of them very often—as often as we please—besides witnessing their manifestations daily in the course of providence, and in the material world around us. We are told of some, that "They have not known the thoughts of the Lord, nor understood his counsel." Let the reader consult Isaiah lv. 8, 9; Psalm xxxiii. 11—cxxxix. 17—xcii. 5. The inspired volume is full of references to God's thoughts.

THE THOUGHTS OF GOD ARE INFINITE THOUGHTS.

God is an infinite being, consequently infinite thoughts naturally belong to him. *Finite* thoughts cannot move in His *infinite* mind. The manifestations we have of them in nature prove them to be infinite. The heavens, with their suns, moons, and stars,—and the earth, with its lofty mountains and wide oceans, are ready to prove that we write nothing but pure truth when we write that the thoughts of God are infinite. When we think of this, we cannot but wonder at the indifference of the world towards them. We all love great thoughts. When any book is presented to our notice as containing great and animating thoughts, we are possessed at once with a desire to glance over its pages for ourselves. Is it not so, intelligent reader? But the thoughts of such a book, after all, great as they may be, stand at an infinite distance from the thoughts of God. The Bible is a book whose pages are animated with Divine and Infinite thoughts. You can buy this book *now* for tenpence. Is it not a wonder that the book which contains such thoughts is so much neglected!

THE THOUGHTS OF GOD ARE NOT ONLY GREAT, BUT GOOD.

It is not always that we see greatness and goodness combined. We have heard it said many times, "What a great man he is—pity that he does not lead a better life!" or, "Mr. So and so is a very good, pious man; but, poor fellow, he has a very feeble mind—his thoughts are too weak to walk themselves." But in God, greatness and goodness hang before us in thoughts that are infinite. *We* are troubled very often with evil thoughts; many of them have passed to-day through our hearts. But the thoughts of God are *all* good. Yes, they are *infinitely* good. When God was surveying the manifestation of his thoughts in nature, he saw that they were all very good. "Omniscience approved what Omnipotence had wrought."

The thoughts of God in nature and providence are great, and good; but we are in haste to pass on to

THE THOUGHTS OF GOD IN THE PLAN OF REDEMPTION.

The thoughts of God appear in the plan of salvation in *new aspects of love.* It is a mistake to think that there is no love in nature. Creation is full of mercy. The provisions of nature declare that the Creator is kind, merciful, and gracious. We meet love and mercy everywhere in the works of God. The healing properties of nature proclaim His loving-kindness. But we have never seen mercy looking so fair and beautiful—*so Divinely grand*—as it looks in the scheme of man's redemption. In the face of Jesus Christ, God's love has put on aspects that are entirely unparalleled in the history of loving-kindness. Look at the whole scheme, from the beginning to the end, and behold the love of God appearing in aspects which reveal an infinite nature in its best *humour.* It is not a frowning God that we see here, but the grand and inviting smiles of Divine love. You have heard it said sometimes, when a

person has greatly altered in manners and appearance, "He is quite another man—so much improved." So it is with regard to the thoughts of men. We cannot say they are the same. We have kind thoughts in nature, but they have been clothed in redemption—in aspects that are entirely new, and Divinely inviting. Angels have fallen in love with them. They are never tired of studying such incomparable aspects—*even of the Divine nature itself.*

THE THOUGHTS OF GOD ARE PRECIOUS THOUGHTS.

Gather them up carefully, my dear reader. His thoughts in Christ!—where is the balance that can weigh their value? How precious are thy thoughts, O God! What would this world be without them! To what strange and delusive conclusions men have arrived on the subject of religion in the absence of revelation. The thoughts of God concerning whom we ought to worship, how we are to prepare for eternity, what will become of us after death—language cannot describe the value of God's thoughts on these subjects to the world. Look at the practices of those who are not guided by the thoughts of God. They prostrate themselves before a dumb idol, and idolatry is said to be the *very abridgment and sum total of all absurdities.* If you have any regard for your eternal safety, I would advise you to consult and respect the thoughts of God as revealed in his word. The thoughts of God are so valuable, that it is not safe to do any thing without consulting them.

THE THOUGHTS OF GOD DIFFER VERY OFTEN FROM THE THOUGHTS OF MEN.

Jehovah, through the prophet Isaiah, tells us that there is a great difference existing between them. My thoughts are not your thoughts. *Our plans*—what about them? They have all been frustrated; very often simply because God differed from us in opinion. God and men cannot agree always on the subject of religion, to say nothing now of their disagreement in the mysteries and workings of providence. What a *daring creature* man must be. He ventures to differ *from God* in his opinion on the subject of religion. They do not agree very often with regard to the person of Christ, the nature and extent of the Atonement, and the ordinances of the gospel. Look at baptism, for instance, and see what a difference there is between God and man's opinion concerning it. Man says, We are to administer infant baptism; but God says, positively, *No.* They do not agree with regard to the subject, nor the mode; but, remember, we ought to obey God rather than man. If you have any spark of love for your eternal welfare and safety, consult God's thoughts. Let them be your counsellors. Hence you shall go on for ever in harmony with everything that is right. Young reader, do not take *one* step, without asking God, Is it best to do so? Do this, and God, in all his power and love, will be at your command. I need not tell you that the Almighty ought to be consulted with before the nearest friend. Let the thoughts of God be our guides for ever. His thoughts ought to be supreme in every heart. His thoughts will stand for ever. Kings must obey them, or perish from the way.

JUSTIFICATION.

"How then can man be justified with God?"—JOB XXV. 4.

JUSTIFICATION is that sovereign act of Divine Grace, by which God, as the righteous Judge, views, deals with, and declares men just and righteous, free from guilt and condemnation, and equitably entitled to eternal life. "How then can man be justified with God?"

In considering this question, regard must be had,

I. TO MAN'S GUILT AND CONDEMNATION.

He is not an innocent, but a guilty, creature—"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 23.)

Neither must we overlook,

II. THE RIGOUR OF THE DIVINE LAW; nor,

III. THE INFLEXIBILITY OF DIVINE JUSTICE.

The former cannot be broken with impunity, and the latter will not acquit the guilty. Hence it is evident that man can alone be justified by, the perfect fulfilment of the one, and the entire satisfaction of the other. It is scarcely necessary to observe how absolutely impossible it is for man to do either the one or the other, much less to do both. To meet this case, God, in his rich grace, foreordained his Son to be a propitiation; and as the Surety, Substitute, Sacrifice, and Redeemer, in the fulness of the time, he came, assumed our nature, and by his obedience, sufferings, and death, fulfilled, magnified, and made honourable the Divine Law, satisfied Divine Justice, obtained eternal redemption, and thus brought in a righteousness, called, and that justly, the righteousness of God, which is unto, and upon all them that believe. Hence it is evident, that the real ground of Justification is found alone in the obedience, sufferings, and death of Jesus, and that by virtue of the imputation of our sin to him, and of his righteousness to us, we, by faith in him, are brought to the enjoyment of this rich blessing. (See Rom. iii. 20, to the end; Gal. iv. 4, 5; 2 Cor. v. 21, &c.)*

* Outline of a Sermon preached by D. CRUMPTON at Salendine Nook, December 4th, 1864.

OUR PROTESTANT NONCONFORMITY—WHAT IT IS, AND HOW WE CAME BY IT.

BY GEORGE WEBB, EYNSFORD, KENT.

THE principal errors which drove many of the God-fearing and most eminent clergymen from the Establishment were the wearing of the "frock" and the reading of the Liturgy; while others, equally pious, did not consider the compulsion by the State to wear such "frock," and read such Liturgy, a sufficient cause for relinquishing their charges. Their consciences were a little more pliable than were the consciences of those sturdy men who suffered the loss of all things rather than submit to man in matters of religion. All honour to such men. There always have been in existence some of that noble class who, like Peter and John, dared say, and risked the consequences of saying, "Whether it be right to obey men rather than God, judge ye." And so there always has been in existence some of the other class, who would submit to teach Popery, or any thing else, for the sake of a good living, sheltering themselves at the same time under the title of Evangelical—some who, as Mr. Spurgeon has recently said, "believe one way, and swear another."

But Nonconformity does not consist of refusing to wear the gown and read the Liturgy only, but still further, of an absolute refusal to swear assent and consent to everything contained in the Book of Common Prayer. This was required of all clergy then, and is required of them still. No wonder that men who had consciences should refuse the oath imposed by the Act of Uniformity. The wonder is that, in the nineteenth century, men should be found to subscribe to such oath. And, lest my readers should think I am too severe, I here produce the solemn declaration which they had then, and still have, to make:—

"I, A B, do solemnly declare my unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained and prescribed in and by the Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and other rites and ceremonies of the Church of England, together with the Psalter and Psalms of David, pointed out as they are to be sung or said in churches; and the form or manner of making, ordaining, and consecrating of bishops, priests, and deacons."

Let me intreat my readers to pause here for a minute and read this little piece over again, and, if you are acquainted with the Book of Common Prayer, so called, let me ask you if you could "assent and consent" to everything contained therein without using the word "unfeigned"? But perhaps you are

not acquainted with the Book of Common Prayer. If not, it will be worth while for you to read it over attentively, for this is the very book Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity (and which Act has never been repealed) required assent and consent to. Noble men, the ancestors of a noble race not all dead yet, who would suffer the loss of all things rather than compound their consciences with the State!—may the Holy Spirit increase them a hundredfold. Well, we will suppose now you are prepared to come to the Prayer Book for the examination of it. First, in the "Absolution." "The Lord hath given power and commandment to his ministers to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins," has rather a smack of Popery about it. The "Apostles' Creed," as it is read, without explanation, sounds strangely—"went down into hell." And what can be made of the "Creed of St. Athanasius"? It has been called a jumble, and richly deserves the title. But what of the Catechism? "What is your name?" "Job." "Who gave you that name?" "My Godfathers and Godmothers in my baptism; wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." Where is the clergyman or layman who will point out the word "Godfather" or "Godmother" in the Bible? Will ye give it up? What does it mean?—Let us go to the next question. "What did your Godfathers and Godmothers then for you?" "They did promise and vow three things in my name. First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh. Secondly, that I should believe all the articles of the Christian Faith. And thirdly, that I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life." "Did you tell them to promise these things for you?" "No; I was only six weeks old when they did so." "Were they very holy people who did so promise for you?" "No; I guess not; for I have been told they had a regular spree at the christening, and all the lot of them got drunk. Besides, I have never seen my Godfather. Father and mother did not know who to get to stand for me; but as they were waiting outside the church, and wondering what they should do, along came a navvy, and they offered him a shilling to go and stand for me. He wanted one and sixpence, but compromised by going home and spending the evening with the christening party." This statement was made to me by a young man about a month since, who seemed to treat it all as a joke.

Page for the Young.

WHAT ONE BLACK-HEADED WORM DID.

"That's a splendid sycamore!" said a gentleman to his friend, to whom he was showing his grounds.

"Yes," replied his friend, who was a naturalist; "but see! here is a wood-worm forcing its way under the bark. If you let that worm alone, it will kill the tree."

The worm was a mean-looking, black-headed thing, about three inches long. The owner of the tree pooh-poohed at the idea of one such worm killing so noble a tree, and said:

"Well, well, we'll see. I'll let the worm try it."

The worm soon worked his way under the bark. The next summer, the leaves of the tree dropped off very early. A year later, it was a dead and rotten thing. *One* worm had killed it. *Only one.*

Sometimes, I see boys and girls with beautiful faces, graceful bodies, and pretty fair characters. They are merry, polite, hopeful boys and girls, but they will cherish some one favourite fault. One will be proud, another vain, a third will be envious, a fourth will be passionate now and then, a fifth will lie, a sixth will break the Sabbath, a seventh will disobey father and mother, an eighth will quarrel and fight; in short, some one fault or other

will be seen working upon their characters as clearly and busily as the black-headed worm was seen boring into the tree. Boys and girls, I have a whisper for you:

"If you let your one great fault alone, it will ruin your soul!"—*Sunday School Advocate.*

LITTLE BY LITTLE.

Do you, my dear young friends, ever think how almost all that is good comes to us? Did you ever see a farmer planting and sowing? Down in the moist earth goes the seed and yellow corn, grain by grain, little by little. God sees the farmer at his work, and knows full well that he has done what he could; so he kindly sends the gentle rain, drop by drop, and not one of these little drops ever forgets its errand—the pleasant errand upon which the good God sent it to the earth. "I have found you out," says the rain-drop to the tiny grain of wheat, "though you are dead and in your grave. God has sent me to raise you up." Well, there is nothing impossible with Him; so when the rain-drop has done its errand, a spark of life shoots out from the very heart of the tiny grain, which is dead and buried, and little by little it makes its way out of the tomb, and stands a single blade, in the warm sunlight. That is nobly done; and if the great God pleased, he could make that little blade strong and fruitful in a single moment. Does he do this? No. Little by little does the stalk wax strong, and its leaves grow slowly, leaf by leaf.

It is only a few days ago that I heard a little girl say, "I am tired, tired, tired! Here is a whole stocking to knit, stitch by stitch! It will never be done."

"But was not this one knit stitch by stitch?" I asked, taking a long one from her basket and holding it up.

"Yes."

"Well, this is done."

The little girl was counting, instead of knitting her stitches. No wonder that she was tired.

Did you ever see a mason building a house of bricks? "Poor man," impatience would say; "what an undertaking!—to start from the earth and go so far towards the sky, brick by brick!" Who ever saw a patient, persevering person try, and not succeed at last? So, then, step by step, which is God's way, must be the best way.—*New York Examiner.*

Reviews.

The Works of David Clarkson, B.D. Vol. II. Edinburgh: James Nichol. London: Nisbit and Co. Dublin: G. Herbert.

THIS is another volume of Nichol's magnificent series of Standard Divines of the Puritan Period, of which epoch it may truly be said, "There were giants in the church in those days." Mr. Nichol, the publisher of this series, is one of the benefactors of the age, and is sparing neither labour nor expense to make his undertaking worthy of his already deservedly high reputation in the publishing world. The paper, the type, and the binding, are of the best possible quality; the editing is evidently done with the most conscientious care and pains-taking; and the works selected for republication are admirable representatives of the period to which they belong. The series would be a very precious addition to the library of every one desirous of theological instruction, while to ministers of the gospel, they are of priceless worth. For presentation purposes they are eminently adapted. In fact, of the whole undertaking, and of the manner in which it is being executed, it is impossible to speak too highly.

We cannot conceive of any thing better calculated to correct some of the unhealthy tendencies of religious thought in the present age, than the republication of the greatest works of the old Puritan divines. These are the men who have deeply impressed their own modes of thought upon the

religious consciousness of the country. They are now in the third century of their reign over the theology of our schools, and though many rivals have sought to dispute their supremacy, their influence is still mighty. It is to us a very hopeful sign of the times, that there should exist among us a sufficient appreciation of these holy men to warrant Mr. Nichol in the continuance of his enterprise. We look upon this fact as an indication that a reaction in favour of the old theology is setting in. "Essays and Reviews," and Colenso, and Maurice, &c., are having their day, but it will soon close: in fact, it is, we think, *already* waning; but our Owens, and John Howes, and Goodwins, and Charnocks, and Flavels, and Gurnalls, and Clarksons, and Bostons, will ever be read by multitudes of appreciating and sympathising hearts.

David Clarkson, B.D., Fellow and Tutor of Clare Hall, Cambridge, is not so well known as some others among his contemporaries. But he deserves to be studied by every theologian. His works are essentially *practical* in their character and tendency, but there is a solid good substratum of sound doctrine underlying his most searching and powerful appeals. He was a firm believer of the doctrines of grace; but his special power lay in the pungency and closeness of his dealings with the conscience. In this attribute he is fully equal to Richard Baxter. No devout person can read such sermons (or rather, *treatises*, for by the fulness of their treatment, all Clarkson's sermons *are* treatises), as those on The New Creature, or, The Conviction of Hypocrites, without the deepest awe. Their exposure of formality, hypocrisy, and self-deception in religion, is indeed terrible. It makes you hold your breath as you proceed; and drives you to renewed searchings of heart. The only relief you can find is in the cry, Lord, search me!

David Clarkson is equally powerful in his expostulations with careless sinners. The sermon on Christ's Gracious Invitation to Sinners, is one of the most melting effusions in our language. We pity the man who can read some of its passages without tears. It goes straight to the heart. Clarkson lived in an age in which, happily, Calvinism had not yet degenerated to any great extent into Hyper-Calvinism. The men who held tenaciously "the five points," had no hesitation in believing that it is the duty of every man who hears the glad tidings of mercy through Christ Jesus, cordially to embrace them. They did not scruple to warn, to exhort, to persuade, to intreat, the vilest transgressors to come to the Saviour for redemption. Though they wrote sermons on *Man's Insufficiency to do anything of Himself* (P. 101, *et seq.*), they preached the glad tidings to all, and pressed them upon the acceptance of all. And these were the men whom the King Eternal delighted to honour!

David Clarkson was an eminently learned man. He was thoroughly versed in ancient and patristic literature, and in all the lore of the schools. Every page teems with evidences of the affluence of the author's resources. But especially is he well furnished in all the departments of Biblical science. His quotations of Holy Scripture, and the illustrations which he draws from its pages, are often singularly felicitous. To use a popular proverb,—he has the whole Bible at his fingers' ends. His imagery is frequently striking and beautiful, and in some passages he rises to the heights of true impassioned eloquence.

Like most men of his age, he abounds in divisions, in sub-divisions, and sub-sub-divisions. Repetitions occasionally occur, which are rather wearisome. We meet, too, with many forms of expression which are now condemned as barbarously ungrammatical, and which we think the editor might with advantage have corrected; such as, "does not moral virtues" (?); "there is hopes of salvation"; "there is hopes of pardon and acceptance"; "there is more hopes of these"; "such appearances of Christ was their delight"; with many others. Now we respectfully submit that in such cases as these the syntax might be altered with perfect regard to truthfulness, and with great advantage to the comfort

and enjoyment of present readers. Then, too, we should like to see all the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew quotations, not suppressed, but translated for the benefit of unlearned readers. The great bulk of our people would be repelled from the reading of a book in which they found several *untranslated* passages in a dead language. And we shall not be satisfied until our people *generally*, and not our ministers merely, become eager readers of such sound divines as David Clarkson.

We give one or two brief extracts as a sample of his general excellence.

"The beams of a formalist's knowledge are not reflected; his mind refracts them. It is like the sunshine in winter, it may give some lustre and refreshing to the earth, and may thaw and mollify the outside, but at night all is frozen up; it makes not the plants grow; or the earth fruitful."—"The formalist's knowledge is weak and partial, may restrain him from the pollutions of the world; but saving knowledge will avoid that in which the world sees no pollution."—"Darkness and the shadow of death are joined in Scripture. Ignorance is spiritual darkness, the very shadow of eternal death. There is but a small partition between you and hell. Hell is outer darkness, and ignorance is inner darkness; it is the very next room to hell. Oh consider your sad condition. Will you stay far short of those who fall short of heaven? If those who come so near Canaan as they can descry it, so near it as they taste some of it, shall yet fall in the wilderness and never enjoy it, how can they come to Canaan who will not stir out of Egyptian darkness? How can you come to the land of promise, come to heaven, who stay in your ignorance, that which is worse than Egyptian darkness, and a condition further from heaven than Egypt is from Canaan? A man with thus much knowledge may possibly perish, but an ignorant person shall certainly perish."—"Zeal, when it is not for God, is but wildfire; when it is not in the cause of God, it is out of its place; like fire in the thatch, not in the chimney, more apt to consume the house than to be serviceable to it."

Extracts, however, must fail to do justice to David Clarkson, for uniform excellency and vigour are the characteristics of every line. We trust our readers will possess themselves of his works, and read him for themselves. Ministers will find the perusal of a few pages weekly an admirable preparation and stimulus to the composition of their own sermons.

Nichol's Series of Commentaries. The first two volumes, containing, Vol. I. *Airay on Philippians, and Cartwright on Colossians.* Quarto.—Vol. II. *King on Jonah, and Rainolds on Obadiah and Haggai.* Quarto. Edinburgh: James Nichol. London: Nisbet. Dublin: G. Herbert.

It was a happy thought of Mr. Nichol's to supplement his series of Standard Divines, with a series of Commentaries on particular books of Holy Scripture, published in the Augustan era of English theology. Expository preaching has never yet held the place among us to which its importance entitles it. This may have arisen from the aversion of the age to profound and consecutive thought; and may have been fostered by a lack of industry and application on the part of ministers. Motto preaching, is comparatively an easy task to a man accustomed to regular pulpit exercises; but to vanquish popular aversion to the consecutive exposition of whole books of holy writ, requires an amount of energy, research, tact, and capacity, for laborious preparation, not possessed by many. As a rule, the people like but little criticism, a very simple exegesis, an earnest exhibition of generally received truth, mingled with a certain proportion of the sensational, but do not care to have the finer shades of thought which underly the sacred text, elicited by a process which demands close attention to be appreciated. The toils of the week are now so engrossing and exhausting, that people desire to have the Lord's Day in every respect a day of *rest*. Happy is that preacher of the reconciling word, who knows how to present in a popular and attractive form the *results* rather than the *processes* of severe thought, and careful investigation! It is not our business to pander to a depraved theological taste, but discreetly and wisely to do our best to correct it.

Brethren who desire to become expert *expounders* of the Holy Scriptures, will find invaluable help in the volumes before us. They are interesting as memorials of a past age, but they have a still higher value for their intrinsic excellence. Dr. Henry Airay was for some time Provost of Queen's College, Oxford, and his lectures on the Epistle to the Philippians were delivered in St. Peter's Church, in that city. We are not aware that he left any other work beside the Commentary before us, which is chiefly remarkable for the plainness and vigour of the language, the strong common sense of the ideas, the naturalness of the interpretation, the thoroughness of the Calvinism and Protestantism, evinced throughout. Of acute critical exegesis there is not any, and for this reason, modern expositors may think but lightly of the volume. But so far as our examination has enabled us to judge, we believe Airay generally gives the sense of the epistle. He is more solid than showy. He makes no parade of his learning, but writes in a style which all can understand and appreciate.

The first volume of the series also contains an Exposition of the Epistle to the Colossians, by the great Puritan and Reformer, Thomas Cartwright, B.D. The sermons are marvellously short for that age of long "preachments," but this may be explained; for, the Commentary, as we have it, "consists of notes by evidently not the most erudite hearer, and seems never to have been seen, or read, or in any way authorised by the preacher. His executors, and editors, Dod and Hildersam, probably disavowed it as imperfect. But while large allowance must and will be made for these facts, after every abatement, there will be found in the Commentary its own best evidence of being genuine, not a little weighty and keen sighted exposition, expressed with less point than his Latin, but well put and suggestive, and above all, much spiritual relish imparted to the grace and truth of this most attractive of Paul's epistles. It is probable that only a very small edition was printed, and consequently it has long been very difficult to be procured, and has fetched an extravagant price."

The second volume opens with Lectures on Jonah, delivered at York, in 1594, by John King, afterwards Lord Bishop of London. The lectures are quaint and rich, full of learning, and containing many striking pungent sayings. The author does not anticipate any of the objections of "the new light" school. He deals with the narrative as he finds it in simple faith, and deduces from it weighty lessons of wisdom. The lectures on Jonah are followed by two sermons by the same learned author.

The second volume contains next, an Exposition of Obadiah, by John Rainolds, D.D., one of the most learned and faithful of the Puritan band in the Established Church, and the ruling mind in the production of our present admirable English version of the Holy Scriptures. "He was styled," says Samuel Clarke, "the light of the University; the glory of Europe; the trumpeter of God's glory; an admirable example of holiness; and, so learned a writer against the Romanists that, his writings were unanswerable." The Commentary on Obadiah exhibits all John Rainolds's excellencies. It is pithy, learned, and suggestive. He points out with great ingenuity the points of resemblance between the ancient Idumeans and the Papists, and the similarity of their doom.

The second volume closes with an Exposition of Haggai by the same commentator. The work was only completed to the 15th verse of the 2nd chapter. It is, however, a very precious fragment, full of stern abhorrence of Popery and its doctrines.

We close this notice by reminding our readers that this is not merely one of the noblest literary enterprises of the day, but one of the cheapest, perhaps the cheapest. We wish Mr. Nichol the encouragement that he so richly deserves. It is only by a very extensive sale that this undertaking can prove remunerative. The zealous publisher ought to be generously sustained by the reading community.

Intelligence.

SAYINGS AND DOINGS OF ROMAN CATHOLICS.

THE O'DONOGHUE, an Irish member of Parliament, is following the steps of Daniel O'Connell; he is agitating for a repeal of the Legislative Union of Ireland with England, effected in 1800; and for the establishment of a separate Irish Parliament. It can scarcely be questioned that O'Connell's agitation gained for the Roman Catholics their present position. In November, 1824, the Right Hon. C. W. Wynn wrote to the Duke of Buckingham, "If we had a war to-morrow, you would in three months have that country [Ireland] IN ARMS, demanding Catholic Emancipation, and a repeal of the Union." The same year, Sir H. Parnell wrote, that if Catholic Emancipation were not carried the next session, the commotion which had been occasioned by O'Connell in Ireland would "end in another GENERAL REBELLION." Lord Grenville wrote in March, 1825, that unless Catholics were admitted to civil power, and PROVISION made for the CATHOLIC CLERGY, there would be "CIVIL WAR in Ireland whenever we might have a foreign enemy to support it, and profit by it." The Catholic Relief Bill was carried in the House of Commons in 1825, but it was lost in the Lords. In 1829 it was made a Government measure, and became law April, 1829. This measure was CLEARLY THE RESULT, IN PART, OF THE FEARS which had been excited of civil war and rebellion by O'Connell's agitation. The Roman Catholics, or some of them, believe that the Act of 1829 was FORCED from the Government. One of them, Sir J. D. Acton, in February last, spoke of that Act as one of the "conquests of FORCE" and "pressure"; and the late Cardinal Wiseman, at the congress at Malines last year, spoke in the highest terms of the effect which that Act has had in promoting the Roman Catholic religion. It is not therefore surprising that the O'Donoghue should think that a repetition of the like pressure will again obtain like results. Cardinal Wiseman said, "The civil emancipation of Catholics, most powerfully contributed to the progress of Catholicism. The year 1829 was to us what the egress from the catacombs was to the early Christians. It must be confessed that it has been especially since the year 1829 that the exterior expansion of Catholicism has been most visibly manifested." He stated what SUMS OF MONEY they had received from Government since that time, and how many new concessions had been made to their "DEMANDS." After such success from appealing to the FEARS of rulers, appeals will, no doubt, be renewed as often as our rulers may be thought to need them. But what will be the end of a Government policy which is guided by FEARS felt of the power of Rome, instead of by the law which forbids the [illegible] Government to interfere with things divine.

A SECOND ROMAN CATHOLIC CONGRESS, like that which met at Malines, in Belgium, in 1863, met there again in 1864. About 4,000 persons are said to have been present, from Belgium, France, England, Germany, Hungary, Spain, Portugal, and Italy.

THE AMERICAN BIBLE UNION.

THE English New Testament, as revised by the Final Committee of the American Bible Union, is now completed, and ready for distribution. It can be had of Messrs. Trübner and Co., 60, Paternoster-row, at the following prices:—

	s.	d.
Plain Cloth Binding, with Double Ruled Border Lines	4	6
Sheep Binding, Coloured Edges ..	5	6
Roan Binding, Gilt Edges.....	6	6
Turkey Morocco, Gilt Edges.....	10	6
Plain Cloth (cheap edition), without Ruled Border Lines	4	0

The Union has been in existence about fourteen years, and during that period has circulated an aggregate of more than 67,000,000 of pages of sacred

Scriptures. Its financial prospects are encouraging, as the following extract from the last report will show:—

"Our receipts exceed those of last year by several thousand dollars. When it is considered that those surpassed the receipts of the preceding year, we derive from these facts pleasing anticipations of future improvement in this department. This is confirmed by other circumstances, which, together, indicate that we shall go on from strength to strength, while we continue to trust in the Lord, and faithfully do our duty."

A "Soldiers' Edition" of the New Testament has been published, and nearly sixty thousand copies put into circulation. The Board of Management is anxious to publish a hundred thousand copies more of this edition for immediate circulation amongst the soldiers, the seamen, the prisoners of war, and the numerous FREED MEN. An appeal for help in this matter, made at the last anniversary meeting, met with a liberal response, nearly seven hundred dollars being promised towards its accomplishment by those present.

Perhaps one other extract from the report of the Union, giving the views of its managers upon their work of revision, may be acceptable to our readers:—

"It must not be thought that our labours upon the revision of the English New Testament will here cease. None are more sensible than our revisers, that the present work, however well done, under the time and circumstances, is yet capable of great improvement. The need of such improvement will be more and more disclosed, as the book is used and criticised. Your board hope to be able to adopt proper measures for collecting and weighing valuable criticisms, and pursuing further inquiries and investigations, both with regard to the Greek text and the English translation, so that at some suitable period every needed improvement may be introduced, and the work stand forth to the world a monument of faithfulness, accuracy, perspicuity, and elegance, unsurpassed and unequalled. . . If a better translation of any word or sentence in the whole book can be made by others, we stand ready to adopt it, and make it our own."

BAPTIST MISSIONARY MEETING, BELIZE, HONDURAS.

The Colonist, a Belize newspaper, of January 7th, says:—"The Baptist congregation under the charge of the Rev. Mr. Kelly, held their annual meeting on Tuesday evening last, for the benefit of the Mission under their care. The attendance was large, and the zeal and energy manifested for the spread of the gospel to the masses throughout the colony were very great, which was practically exhibited in the collection which was taken up in aid of the work, and which amounted to ninety-two dollars. This society has a number of ministers and teachers throughout the colony, who have been in some cases preaching and teaching 'without money and without price,' the best evidence of their great sincerity. And, indeed, their report showed that the church in Belize, as well as the out-stations, was supported the past year from less than 200 dollars. They have evidently been doing much good, and merit the support of the charitable and Christian public."

OBITUARY.

MR. BENJAMIN CRUMPTON, OF SHREWSBURY.

MR. BENJAMIN CRUMPTON, the subject of this brief notice, was born at Shrewsbury, in the county of Shropshire, on the 3rd of September, 1813, and died January 3rd, 1865, having attained the age of 51 years. He served his apprenticeship to the ironmongery trade in Shrewsbury, and was married soon after its completion. He was baptised at Burslem, Staffordshire, by Mr. Muchley, July 5th, 1835, and the sermon was preached by his father, the Rev. Thomas Crumpton (now of Leeds), from the words, "What mean ye by this service?" (Exod. xii. 26.) He was a stanch adherent to the truths of the gospel, a Strict Baptist, and very fond of the Sunday school, having filled the office of superintendent in several towns. He also delighted in visiting the sick and dying, and was made an humble instrument in the hands of God in leading poor sinners to the

blessed Saviour. He had been gradually sinking since 1860, but was taken rapidly off at last, the disease being inward consumption. His mind was tranquil from the commencement of his illness. For the three weeks he was confined to his room, his mind was set upon things above. The last hymn that he was permitted to sing, which was in the middle of the night, was that beautiful one of Cowper's:—

"There is a fountain, filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins," &c.

His mind was so filled with gospel truths, that he was continually repeating verse after verse. He said that he did not require much reading, though his wife often read some sweet portions to him. The last that she read was the 22nd chapter of Revelation. On the Saturday before his death he became delirious, and continued so until towards the middle of the night. His first utterance on recovering from that state was, "My soul doth magnify thee, O God!" From that time he was sensible to the last. His speech, through weakness, was so feeble, that ofttimes he could not be understood; but at other times he spoke audibly. He took farewell of his family, and friends that were present with him, as if he were going a journey on business. A friend engaged in prayer a short time before he died, and spoke of the all-atoning blood of Christ, and hoped that he could embrace it, when he put his hands together as if to take hold of it. When near his end he repeated the 3rd verse of hymn 554, Dr. Rippon's Selection,

"Come, ye angelic envoys, come,
And lead the willing pilgrim home;
Ye know the way to Jesus' throne,
Source of my joys, and of your own."

A friend asked him if all was right. He answered, "Yes." "Then," she said, "the valley is not dark?" He replied, "No;" then, turning his eyes upwards, he fell asleep.

His loss is felt much by his family and friends, as he was a kind husband, an affectionate father, and a good adviser. He felt that he was a sinner saved by grace, and was able to say that "Christ is all and in all." We sorrow not even as others which have no hope.

"He is gone to the grave, but we will not deplore him,
Whose God was his ransom, his guardian, and guide;
He gave him, he took him, and he will restore him:
And death has no sting, for the Saviour has died."

BAPTISMS.

BRAMLEY. — March 5th, four; by Mr. Ashworth.

SUTTON, SURREY. — Wednesday, February 22nd, two; by Mr. William Norton.

THE BAPTIST EVANGELICAL SOCIETY.

Meeting of Subscribers and Messengers at the Baptist Library, Took's-court, Chancery-lane, Friday Afternoon, 28th April, at Three o'clock.

Public Meeting at Little Alie-street, Monday Evening, May 1st. The Rev. P. Dickerson to take the chair at half-past Six.

The Annual Meeting will be held in the Baptist Chapel, Latchford, near Warrington, Cheshire, on Thursday, May 11th. Further particulars will be given next month.

THE BAPTIST TRACT SOCIETY.

The Twenty-fourth Annual Meeting of the Baptist Tract Society will be held (D.V.) on Thursday Evening, April 27th, at Exeter Hall, in the Strand. The chair to be taken at half-past Six o'clock by Dr. Thomas Price, of Aberdare. Several brethren from the country will address the meeting.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BAPTIST UNION.

To the Editors of the Primitive Church Magazine.

MY DEAR SIRS,—Will you kindly allow me to inform your readers that the Annual Meeting of the Baptist Union will be held on Monday, April 24th. There will be both morning and evening sessions, dinner and tea being provided in the interval. The

Rev. Dr. Angus, President of Regent's Park College, has accepted the office of Chairman of the Union for the coming year, and his address will form an important part of the morning's business. The chief subjects proposed for discussion are, "Union amongst Baptists by the Agency of Associations," and "the Extension of the Gospel in Villages—its Difficulties and Obstructions."

The Morning Meeting will be held, as usual, in the Library of the Mission House, and for the subsequent engagements of the day the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon has kindly granted the use of the spacious rooms in the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

The Committee are also taking steps by which they hope to secure similar hospitalities for ministers and delegates to those so liberally provided at Birmingham at the Autumnal Meeting of the Union.

I am, my dear Sirs,
Yours very truly,
JAMES H. MILLARD, *Sec.*

Baptist Library,
March 20th, 1865.

RECEIVED FOR THE BAPTIST TRACT SOCIETY.

By the TREASURER.	£	s.	d.
From the Baptist Church, Eday, Orkney ....S.	0	10	0
Mrs. Daniel, London ....S.	0	10	0
Ditto ,, ...D.	0	5	0
Miss Ashlin ....S.	0	10	0
Mr. McRitchie, Lewisham....S.	0	10	6
Collected by Mr. WHITEHEAD.			
At Bath.			
Rev. J. Huntley ....S.	0	5	0
George Cox, Esq. ....S.	0	5	0
Rev. Dr. O. Winslow ....D.	0	5	0
Mr. Henry Martins ....D.	0	3	6
Mr. T. Archard....D.	0	3	0
Three Friends, 2/6 each....D.	0	7	6
Two Friends, 1/0 each ....D.	0	2	0
At Westbury.			
Mr. Benjamin Lane....S.	0	5	0
Miss Pruce ....S.	0	2	6
Mr. William Kates ....S.	0	2	6
Mrs. Bevan ....D.	0	2	0
At Westbury Leigh.			
J. Harrop, Esq. ....D.	0	5	0
Four Friends, 2/6 each ....D.	0	10	0
Penknap, Westbury.			
Rev. W. Jeffery ....S.	0	5	0
Collection after the Prayer Meeting ..	0	10	0
At Froma.			
Rev. J. Holroyd ....S.	1	0	0
Mr. Alfred Coombs ....S.	0	5	0
Mr. H. P. Coombs ....S.	0	5	0
Three Friends (2/6, 2/6, 2/) ....D.	0	7	0
At Wells.			
Mr. C. Tyte ....S.	0	2	6
Mr. J. Tate....S.	0	2	6
Mr. S. Hartrey ....S.	0	2	6
Mr. J. Hillier....S.	0	2	6
Two Friends (2/6, 1/) ....D.	0	3	6
At Bridgwater.			
J. W. Sully, Esq. ....S.	0	10	0
J. Whitley, Esq. ....D.	0	5	0
Mrs. Nichols ....D.	0	5	0
Mrs. Tuff ....D.	0	3	0
Mr. J. Dosson ....D.	0	2	6
At Taunton.			
Mr. W. Chapman ....S.	0	5	0
Three Friends, 2/6; and one, 1/ ....D.	0	8	6
At Tiverton.			
J. Lane, Esq. ....D.	0	5	0
Five Friends, 2/6 each ....D.	0	12	6
At Exeter.			
Miss Adams ....D.	1	0	0
Mr. John Wilson ....D.	0	5	0
Mr. George Treffry ....D.	0	5	0
Six Friends, 2/6 each ....D.	0	15	0
Three Friends, 2/ each ....D.	0	6	0
At Torquay.			
George Edmondstone, Esq. ....S.	0	10	0
J. Brown, Esq. ....S.	0	5	0
Mr. R. G. Breeze ....S.	0	5	0
Mr. William Bailey ....S.	0	5	0
Mr. J. Thomas ....S.	0	5	0
Mr. J. H. Brown ....S.	0	2	6
Two Friends (2/6, 2/) ....D.	0	4	6
At Brixham.			
G. W. Baddeley, Esq. ....S.	0	5	0
Mr. G. S. Mather ....S.	0	5	0
Mr. R. N. Smith ....S.	0	2	6
Three Friends, 2/6 each....D.	0	7	6
Four Friends....D.	0	4	6
At Newton Abbott.			
Mr. E. Dawe ....S.	0	5	0
Mr. John Harris ....D.	0	3	6
Rev. F. Pearce....D.	0	2	6
Four Friends....D.	0	6	0
At Devonport.			
J. G. Stephenson, Esq. ....S.	0	10	0
Richard Eastman, Esq. ....S.	0	5	0
Mr. W. Harvey....S.	0	5	0
Mr. Mark Tucker....S.	0	7	6
Mrs. Peek ....S.	0	5	0
Miss Westhorp ....S.	0	4	0
Mr. R. Stephenson ....S.	0	2	6
A Few Friends....D.	0	5	0
Four Friends, 2/6 each; and one, 1/ D.	0	11	0
At Stonehouse.			
Rev. C. Hemington ....S.	0	5	0
Mr. Charles Trego ....S.	0	10	0
Mr. William Brown....S.	0	2	6
Miss Brown ....S.	0	5	0